Rail road routes to Pakistan

4193. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to open five rail road routes to Pakistan passport holders on Indo-Pak border and on line of control in Kashmir sector;

(b) if so, the names of check posts to be opened; and

(c) what has been Pakistan's response to India's initiative/decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c) Government are of the view that the promotion of people-to-people contacts, by making travel between India and Pakistan as simple and easy as possible, will contribute to the development of good neighbourly ties with Pakistan. In keeping with this approach, on 9th July 2001, Government announced that Pakistani passport holders will be allowed to come by the road route and obtain visas at the check-post at Attari. An additional check-post will be opened at Munabao, in Rajasthan. Similar check-posts will also be opened at designated points along the IB and the LOC in Jammu and Kashmir.

During a meeting with the Pakistan Foreign Secretary, on the sidelines of the recently concluded meeting of the SAARC Standing Committee of Foreign Secretaries at Colombo (9-10 August 2001), Indian Foreign Secretary urged Pakistan to facilitate implementation of these steps and consider taking similar measures of its own.

Payment of less salary to workers in UAE

† 4194. SHRI GOPALSINHG. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of EXTERNA!. AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the compames are paying less salaries to the Indian workmen engaged in construction field m UAE;

(b) whether Government have taken up the matter officially with the Government of UAE to resolve the issue;

(c) if so. the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.